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What is claimed is:

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1   1. A method of optically scanning a target item, comprising:

2   predefining settings for scanning parameters appropriate to a photographic image;

3   optically scanning the target item using the predefined settings to form a digital

4   image of the target item; and

5   automatically converting the digital image into a data file.

1   2. The method of claim 1, further including:

2   automatically storing the data file.

1   3. The method of claim 2, wherein the storing includes storing the data file on a file

2   system.

1   4. The method of claim 3, further including specifying a date, and wherein the

2   storing further includes storing the data file on the file system in a folder associated with

3   the date.

1   5. The method of claim 4, wherein the folder is associated with a particular month

2   and year.

1   6. The method of claim 1, wherein the scanning parameters are selected from the

2   group consisting of pixel depth, resolution, crop mode, and skew correction mode.

1   7. The method of claim 6, wherein the scanning parameter settings appropriate to a

2   photographic image includes:

3   pixel depth = 24-bit color;

4   resolution = 150 dots per inch;

5   crop mode = automatic border detection; and

6   skew correction mode = automatic image straightening.

1   8. The method of claim 4, wherein the file system has no folder associated with the

2   date, further including:

3   creating the folder associated with the date.

1   9. The method of claim 4, wherein the data file is a plurality of data files and

2   wherein the file system has a plurality of folders, further including:

3   viewing a representation of the plurality of folders; and

4   viewing a representation of the data files in one of the folders.

1   10. The method of claim 1, further including providing an image capture signal to

2   initiate the scanning, and wherein the scanning and converting is performed without any

3   further user intervention.

1   11. A method of automatically organizing digital images, comprising:

2   acquiring a digital image from an image source;

3   automatically associating a date with the digital image;

4   automatically converting the digital image into a data file; and

5   storing the data file into a folder of a file system, the folder associated with the

6   date.

1   12. The method of claim 11, further including:

2   creating the folder if no other folder is associated with the date.

1   13. The method of claim 11, wherein the date is the capture date when the image

2   was captured by the image source.

1   14. The method of claim 11, wherein the date is the storage date when the image

2   was converted into a data file.

1   15. The method of claim 11, wherein the data folder is associated with a particular

2   month and year.

1   16. The method of claim 11, wherein the data folder is selected from a set of data

2   folders.

1   17. The method of claim 11, wherein the digital image is a previously captured

2   image, and wherein the acquiring further includes:

3   uploading the previously captured image.

1   18. The method of claim 11, wherein the acquiring further includes:

2   predefining settings for image acquisition parameters appropriate to a

3   photographic image; and

4   capturing the digital image with the image source according to the predefined

5   settings.

1   19. The method of claim 11, further comprising:

2   performing a post-processing operation on the data file.

1   20. The method of claim 19, wherein the performing includes performing an image

2   polishing operation.

1   21. The method of claim 19, wherein the performing includes processing the data

2   file with an application program.

1   22. The method of claim 21, wherein the performing further includes sending the

2   processed data file to a destination.

1   23. The method of claim 22, wherein the destination is a peripheral device.

1   24. The method of claim 23, wherein the peripheral device is selected from the

2   group consisting of a printer and a fax machine.

1   25. The method of claim 21, wherein the application program is selected from the

2   group consisting of an image polishing application, a creative printing application, a photo

3   album application, an e-mail application, and a photo web site upload application.

1   26. A method of processing digital images from a plurality of image sources,

2 comprising:

3   predefining at least one set of image acquisition parameters, each set associated

4 with a corresponding one of a group of image sources and appropriate for acquiring a

5 photographic image with the corresponding image source;

6   configuring a selected one of the image sources with the associated set of image

7 acquisition parameters;

8   acquiring a digital image from the selected one of the image sources;

9   automatically converting the digital image into a data file; and

10   integrating the data file into a file structure common to data files from all the image

11 sources.

1   27. An image processing system, comprising:

2   at least one image source, each image source for providing at least one digital

3 image upon request;

4   an image capture subsystem coupled to the at least one image source for

5 requesting and receiving the at least one digital image from the at least one image source,

6 the image capture subsystem further for associating a date with each digital image and

7 automatically converting each digital image into a corresponding image file; and

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8   a file system coupled to the image capture subsystem for automatically storing

9   each image file in a selected one of a plurality of data folders, the selected data folder

10   associated with the date.

1   28. The image processing system of claim 27, comprising:

2   an image management subsystem coupled to the image capture subsystem and the

3   file system for viewing the plurality of data folders and the image files in a specified data

4   folder.

1   29. The image processing system of claim 28, comprising:

2   a post-processing subsystem coupled to the image management subsystem for

3   post-processing at least one selected one of the image files.

1   30. The image processing system of claim 29, wherein the post-processing

2   subsystem is further coupled to the file system for accessing the selected ones of the image

3   files.

1   31. The image processing system of claim 29, comprising:

2   an image destination coupled to the post-processing subsystem for receiving

3   output data corresponding to at least one selected one of the image files.

1   32. The image processing system of claim 27, wherein the date is an image

2   acquisition date provided by the image source.

1   33. The image processing system of claim 27, wherein the date is a current date

2   provided by a date subsystem coupled to the image capture subsystem.

1   34. The image processing system of claim 27, wherein the at least one image

2   source is an optical scanner, and wherein the image capture subsystem provides predefined

3   settings appropriate to a photographic image to the optical scanner for use in providing

4   the at least one digital image.

1   35. A processor-readable medium having processor-executable instructions

2   thereon which, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to:

3   acquire a digital image from an image source;

4   automatically convert the digital image into a data file having a date associated

5   with the digital image; and

6   store the data file into a data folder of a file system, the folder associated with the

7   date.

1   36. A processor-readable medium having processor-executable instructions

2   thereon which, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to:

3   predefine settings for scanning parameters appropriate to a photographic image;

4   optically scan the target item using the predefined settings to form a digital image

5   of the target item; and

6   automatically convert the digital image into a data file.

1   37. An image processing system, comprising:

2   means for acquiring a digital image from an image source;

3   means for automatically converting the digital image into a data file having a date

4 associated with the digital image; and

5   means for storing the data file into a data folder of a file system, the folder

6 associated with the date.

1   38. An image processing system, comprising:

2   means for predefining settings for scanning parameters appropriate to a

3 photographic image;

4   means for optically scanning the target item using the predefined settings to form a

5 digital image of the target item; and

6   means for automatically converting the digital image into a data file.

1   39. A method for optically scanning a target item, comprising:

2   a step for predefining settings for scanning parameters appropriate to a

3 photographic image;

4   a step for optically scanning the target item using the predefined settings to form a

5 digital image of the target item; and

6   a step for automatically converting the digital image into a data file.

1   40. A method for automatically organizing digital images, comprising:

2   a step for acquiring a digital image from an image source;

3   a step for automatically converting the digital image into a data file having a date

4   associated with the digital image; and

5   a step for storing the data file into a data folder of a file system, the folder

6   associated with the date.

1   41. An image processing system, comprising:

2   at least one image source, each image source for providing at least one digital

3   image upon request;

4   an image capture subsystem coupled to the at least one image source which

5   requests and receives the at least one digital image from the at least one image source,

6   associates a date with each image, and automatically converts each image into a

7   corresponding image file; and

8   a file system coupled to the image capture subsystem which receives each image

9   file from the image capture subsystem and automatically stores each image file in a

10   selected one of a plurality of data folders, the selected data folder associated with the date.